

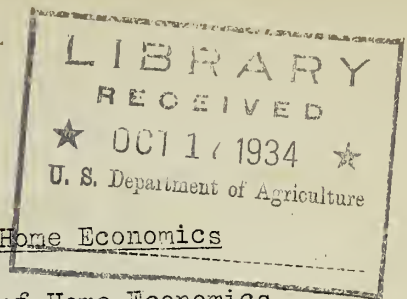
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159
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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

All in the Day's Work in the Bureau of Home Economics



A radio talk by Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Tuesday, October 2, 1934.

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MR. SALISBURY: Miss Van Deman, what's on your calendar today?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, I've got a rather large order on my hands today. Too large an order to carry out well I'm afraid in 5 minutes. This is it. A Maryland club woman wrote me recently and asked whether I'd talk some day soon about the different kinds of work we do in the Bureau of Home Economics. Just call it "All in the day's work," she suggested. So that's the order. And if I try to crowd too much into the answer, please forgive me.

One of the nicest jobs that comes to me in the course of the day's work is to meet some of the people from other countries who visit the Department of Agriculture to find out how we are applying science to home problems. They look on the United States as a leader in home economics research.

Recently we had a most interesting visitor from Sao Paulo, Brazil, the city that ships us millions of pounds of coffee every year. But this distinguished woman didn't come to tell us about coffee; she came to ask us what we could tell her about child welfare. She was looking for new ideas to use in the child clinics she has helped to organize down there in South America. She wanted a copy of every one of our bulletins about food for children and well-balanced diet, and she asked for the latest news about vitamins and other food values. In the course of our tour around the Bureau, we stopped in Doctor Munsell's laboratories, and saw the white rats with bowlegs and other symptoms like those of a child with a severe case of rickets. It was a perfect demonstration of what happens when the growing body doesn't get enough vitamin D from sunshine, or cod-liver, or some other rich source. And the children's clothing down in Miss Scott's room interested her very much also. "Why, isn't this the first time anybody has really applied science to the design of children's clothes?" she asked me. And I had to admit it was. The whole idea of self-help clothes for small boys and girls was brandnew to her and so were the designs for baby dresses and gowns, so easy to make and easy to wash and iron. She took away with her a list of the 29 patterns which commercial companies are making from our designs.

Then just the other day came two representatives from Czechoslovakia asking what information we had on milk and dairy products, and food values, and diet in general. One of them representing the ministry of public health which has headquarters in Prague, apologized for his English, but I assured him that it was so much better than my Czech that he needn't worry. And

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after that we got on very well indeed. Of course I gave him our bulletins on "Milk for the family" and our food budgets and diet plans.

Another day the head of the home science department from the University of Otago in New Zealand visited us. Of course, she wanted particularly to see our work on meat cookery, and she stayed a long time in Miss Alexander's laboratory discussing the best ways of cooking lamb and beef to save food value and develop flavor. She was fascinated by the meat thermometer inserted into a big rib roast of beef so that you could tell exactly when to take it from the oven and have it rare, medium, or well done at the center. New Zealanders haven't any such science about their meat cooking, she said, but she was going back to spread the idea. Also the research on different grades of wool in the textile division interested her keenly. She watched the people putting samples of blankets into the tensile strength machine and also testing them for warmth. Across the hall the chemists told her their method of finding out how fast both wool and cotton fabrics will wear out.

But don't get the notion that you need to come from Brazil, or Czechoslovakia, or New Zealand in order to see our laboratories. They are always open to anyone seriously interested in home economics.

For instance, the middle of this month when the American Dietetics Association meets here in Washington will be a very busy time for Miss Chatfield and her staff who work on the analyses showing the chemical composition of foods. She will probably have visiting dietitians a-plenty asking about the calories and the carbohydrates and the minerals in all sorts of common and uncommon foods. For figures of this kind, you know, are necessary to work up an accurate diet for anybody - sick or well. And Doctor King and her associates will be explaining their experiments on cooking soybeans, and potatoes, and eggs, and the different varieties of rice, and all the rest.

Now, I've just sketched for you ever so briefly some of the work of the three main divisions: foods and nutrition, textiles and clothing, and economics. I haven't done real justice to any one. But if your club has a home economics day on the program for this winter, write to me and I'll send you material to use as reference and to put into your library.

And Goodbye for this time.